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Things That Never Wear Out

Alliance of Church With Medicine

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Snapshot by Ashley Hastings

THE STAFF CABIN AT BEAR MOUNTAIN

WHERE, FOR SUMMER WEEKENDS AND FOR A FEW DAYS IN MANY INSTANCES, MEMBERS OF OUR STAFF AND THEIR FAMILIES HAVE FOUND BRIEF RESPITES FROM THE RUSH OF WORK AT THE CHURCH. THE CABIN WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THEM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AS THEY MAY FIND OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE BRIEF VISITS.

Things That Never Wear Out

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

In lines familiar to us all Wordsworth celebrated his delight in a rainbow:

> My heart leaps up when I behold
> A rainbow in the sky:
> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man;
> So be it when I shall grow old,
> Or let me die!

That is to say, the kind of experience represented in the love of nature with a rainbow in the sky is not spoiled by the attrition of time. A boy can begin it and an old man can still find there fresh delight.

Whether old or young, as we stand on the threshold of another year, the range of truth thus suggested ought to be important to us. The wear and tear of time are obvious. If we older ones feel that more poignantly, you younger ones with your eyes open must see it too. For there are not many experiences, are there, concerning which one can say,

> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man;
> So be it when I shall grow old.

We are not going to say this morning that the worth and joy of life lie altogether in such experiences. As there are seasonal fruits which one does not expect to have growing in one's orchard all the year around, so there are seasonal experiences, peculiar each to a special period of life, to be rejoiced in then even though they cannot be continued. There are experiences peculiar to childhood which after childhood passes never will come back again, and ardors and romances in youth which after youth is gone will not return. But while this seasonal nature of life is true and the recognition of it important, lest being now youths we still cling to our childhood or, being now adults, we refuse with disastrous psychological results to give up the experiences of youth, yet how much of the depth and richness of life lie in this other realm, in experiences like Wordsworth's with nature, which we can start in childhood and then go on with all our life long to the end!

We may illustrate our meaning first from the very realm which Wordsworth himself suggests. Alas for the child who is not early introduced to the love of nature! Something is lost from that child's life that never can be made up. For *there* is an experience which, no matter how long one lives, never need wear out. How many of us are thankful that early in childhood we fell in love with trees and hills and brooks and flowers, which all the years since have been true friends to us! The vicissitudes of the passing decades have been many and sometimes difficult but always the friendship of nature, steadying, healing, comforting, has been there. Why do we not speak of this more often in our churches—this spiritual ministry of nature to those who love her, this literal meaning of the psalm,

> He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
> He leadeth me beside still waters.
> He restoreth my soul.

Indeed, this experience is of profound importance to religion. One of the most powerful influences that has played with dire effect upon religion in

recent generations has been city life. How can a person who lives merely in a city and is like some Manhattanites who never come north of Fourteenth Street, be profoundly religious? Everything he sees is man-made. He swims, as it were, in a sea of man's inventions and creations. What is there in the mechanical externalities which environ him to suggest God? Whenever religion vitally survives in the city, you will find souls, I think, who are not simply city-made but are at home with mountains and woods and the sea and the open sky, that vast background of nature's wonder and mystery which man did not create and before which he is still a little child.

The Bible, for example, the supreme book of religion, is also one of the great books of nature. At its best the Old Testament sprang from the out-of-doors, where

> The heavens declare the glory of God;
> And the firmament showeth his handiwork.

As for the New Testament, while Paul was a city man and said little of nature, Jesus came from the countryside, and one who has been in Galilee in springtime, when the flowers are clothed more gorgeously than Solomon in all his glory, feels how deep in nature was the rootage of his faith in God, who "hath made everything beautiful in its time." Surely, it was no accident that when the end came and the supreme struggle of Jesus' soul was upon him,

> Into the woods my Master went.

Now, this fellowship with nature one can begin as a little child. Although one live ever so long it will not wear out. John Burroughs was one of the great nature-lovers of our country. On his eighty-third birthday he said to a circle of friends at a house party, "I have had a happy life. My work has been my play, and I don't want a better world than this to play in, or better men and women for my friends."

Consider another illustrative experience which we can begin in childhood and which never need wear out, the love of reading. Many here remember as one of the earliest reminiscences of home the excitement and fascination of reading—first books read to us and then books read by us. Here was an experience opening before our childhood's astonished eyes, new and strange and marvelous, and with this significance also which then we did not understand —that always books would be our friends.

> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man;
> So be it when I shall grow old,
> Or let me die!

Why do we not speak of this oftener in the churches? Reading is so influential in our lives! So many of the turning points in man's spiritual history have been caused by it, as with Saint Augustine hearing the voice in the garden, "Take up and read," or as with Luther rising up from study of the Epistle to the Galatians to shake Europe with his proclamation of the gospel's freedom! Many a perplexing question about Paul we do not know the answer to, but this we know, that he was a great reader. For in his last imprisonment in Rome, with the end almost at hand, he wrote to his young friend Timothy, "Bring when thou comest . . . the books, especially the parchments." Ah Paul, we cannot always understand your theology but we understand that!

To be sure, we for whom the printing press has made reading the common habit of every day often use trivially this great resource. We read to keep up

with our professional or business specialties. But a man who uses books in this way only, as Pharaoh used slaves to build ever higher the pyramid of his practical success, does not know what real reading means. Or we read to keep up with the swiftly moving times—newspapers, magazines, books, pouring in an endless flood from the presses. But a man who uses reading in this way only misses what real reading means. He never would read Homer, which is hardly a means of keeping up with the times, and then, like Keats, say about it afterwards:

> Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken.

Or again, we read because other people read and because we are expected to read the books they are talking of. Of all social coercions nothing is much more compulsive than the exclamation, "What! have you not read so-and-so?" I celebrate today another and higher kind of experience, the spiritual friendship of great books intently read, deeply pondered, one of the abiding experiences of life which a child begins and an old man still gets his comfort from. So said Charles Kingsley—"Except a living man, there is nothing more wonderful than a book!" So said Milton—"A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit."

Moreover, this experience is not private and peculiar. It belongs to all of us. Great books are the great democrats. If the master souls whose words have been for the healing of the nations were here present in the flesh, we could not meet them one by one. They would not come to call on us and explain the way life looks to them. We should see them only from afar. But in their books they come to visit us as though there were none else on earth for them to call upon. Though we be so poor we must buy paper covers, they will be there and in our plain room will sit and talk with us. If we are dull and slow to understand, they will patiently say over and over again their meaning. If we forget, they will be there tomorrow to repeat their message. Great books are the great democrats, and the experience of their companionship is one of the abiding resources of the soul from childhood to the grave. So, when Tennyson was dying, he held a volume of Shakespeare in his hand. When they recovered Shelley's body from the sea, after the storm off Leghorn, a copy of Aeschylus was in his pocket. When Plato died, he had the *Mimes* of Sophron under his head.

Now, with these two illustrations in mind, the love of nature and the friendship of books, consider that the seasonal experiences of life, fitted to one period only of our existence, constitute our foreground, so important that life grows ill if it be not well handled, but that the background of life, its depth and horizon and enduring worth, comes from this other kind of experience which we can begin in childhood and go through with to the very end. I raise the question this New Year's time: How many things do we possess of this enduring kind?

For example, consider a clear conscience as belonging to this category. A child can enter into that experience and an old man deeply needs it. Some of us were reared in families where internal conscientiousness, not external regimentation, was the reliance of the home. I can remember yet the first time I tried as a boy to cover up a piece of crookedness and felt the appalling inner misery of an accusatory conscience.

Long years afterward, when I read Coleridge's description of what an outraged conscience can do to a man, I remembered that childhood's experience—

> Like one, that on a lonesome road
> Doth walk in fear and dread,
> And having once turned round walks on,
> And turns no more his head;
> Because he knows, a frightful fiend
> Doth close behind him tread.

When one pleads for a kind of life that leaves the conscience unashamed, one is commonly understood to be talking morals. But today I am thinking rather of the fact that as a man grows older few things so help him to stand up under hardship as does an unashamed conscience. Standing the gaff as the years pass is not in itself easy but if, in addition to the natural gainsayings and limitations of aging life, a man has to live inwardly with a nasty conscience, how does he stand it? Not simply for the sake of what is commonly called morals but for the sake of a livable life I should say to youth as Phillips Brooks did:

> To keep clear of concealment, to keep clear of the need of concealment, to do nothing which he might not do out on the middle of Boston Common at noonday—I cannot say how more and more that seems to me to be the glory of a young man's life.

Indeed, we have spoken so far as though only lovely things—delight in nature, the friendship of books, and a good conscience—carried through to the end. But, of course, other things also carry through. Some sins are like recurring decimals: three into ten, three times and one over, then three into ten, three times and one over, and yet once more, three into ten, three times and one over. Who has not seen some things begun in youth whose consequences go on and on like that? But while in one sense sin does thus carry through, in another sense, how it wears out! How it passes from expectation through committal into memory and never is desirable again! As the years pass, as much as any other thing, an unashamed conscience makes life worth living.

> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man;
> So be it when I shall grow old.

Consider also that deep interest in intellectual and social causes belongs to this category. I well remember the fascinated hours in boyhood when my father told me of my grandsire's house with its secret closet where escaping slaves were concealed until they could be rowed on dark nights across the Niagara River to Canada and liberty, and of how, one day, the official searchers came to my grandfather's suspected house, loudly seeking a lost slave, and how the slave, hidden in the secret closet, died of fright while they were vainly searching for him. There to a small boy's fascinated imagination was a strange new interest—a social cause that had cost danger and sacrifice, not finished even yet, which our fathers served and then handed on to us, as though we too should have a hand in making a freer world. Such are some of the great hours in childhood.

Now as the years pass and age comes on, he who enters ever more deeply into this experience—until he lives not simply in himself but in great interests, intellectual and social, more important than himself—is preparing an enriched old age. I do not mean necessarily an easy old age. He may be stricken in body and estate. If he lives long enough, as Holmes said,

The mossy marbles rest
On the lips that he has prest
In their bloom,
And the names he loved to hear
Have been carved for many a year
On the tomb.

But as the years pass, a woman like Jane Addams, for example—interested in everything worth being interested in—though she grow old cannot by any one be pitied. The whole background of such a life is steady, the continuous experience of living in and for something more than oneself that begins in childhood and ends only with the grave.

Here again our plea is made, you see, not simply in the name of morals. Selfishness is immoral. Yes, but, may a minister say it? selfishness is even more than that.

The wretch, concentred all in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

That kind of trouble with selfishness, which Sir Walter Scott felt, that it makes man a "wretch, concentred all in self," is nearer our concern today. Self-centredness peters out. Time corrodes it. It has no enduring quality. Under it one shrivels up at last. The years do devastating things to the man who lives by it. Only the other day I had a letter from a man who confessed to an absorbingly self-centred life and now at sixty wanted me to tell him how on earth he could make life seem worth going on with.

As we see the years pass over us and old age coming on, do we not all feel one desire? We want to be no mere slaves of time. We do not want to be utterly at the mercy of the calendar. We want something about us that time and tide cannot touch. And here plainly is something—great interests more important than oneself that one lives in and cares for, that were before we came and will be afterwards—treasures, Jesus called them, treasures which neither moth nor rust doth consume, nor thieves break through and steal.

Consider also a deep, interior, spiritual life, grounded in faith in God and sustained by a sense of divine companionship, as belonging to this category. A child can begin that and an old man deeply needs it. In this regard religion is like music, an experience to which, in ways simple yet profound, a child responds, and which, if we are fortunate, lasts and grows through all the years, to be the comfort and sustenance of age.

How profoundly we do need these enduring experiences! For modern life is full of rapid turnovers. Probably life always was like that, but machine industry has accentuated it, so that now things are deliberately made to be worn out and thrown away. And when from physical things we look to psychological experience, there too the same principle exists. For our emotional life is played on by the swift and transient impact of passing sensations through newspapers, movies, radio, and what not, deliberately designed to produce what we call a 'kick' and then be done with, so that, if we do not beware, our lives become mere immediacies and sensationalisms. And if these two towering perils of modern living, immediacy and sensationalism, rule us, then transiency besets everything and a certain meaningless discontinuity takes all abiding significance from life.

Today we are trying to get clearly in our view another range of experience, not aristocratic and reserved for the few, not costing much in money, rather

the most democratic and accessible of all experiences—the love of nature, the companionship of books, the unashamed conscience of a good character, the great interests of man's common weal, music, the interior resources of a spiritual life, the lasting experiences that are not merely periodic but go with us across all the years from childhood to the grave.

Now, a profound religious experience —"I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"—does belong to that category. To be sure, plenty of things about religion are periodic and face a rapid turnover. Over a century ago Andover Theological Seminary was founded and in the dogmatic spirit of the time a creed was laid down as its foundation concerning which the fathers of the institution said, "Every article of the abovesaid Creed shall forever remain entirely and identically the same, without the least alteration, or any addition or diminution." Well, that creed lasted about seventy-five years and then its final defender was called "the dauntless soldier of a forlorn hope." Plenty of things about religion face a rapid turnover.

The religious experience itself, the deep and inward sense of a divine companionship, however, is like the love of nature or of music, one of the enduring things. Some of us, remembering back, think we understand at least a little what Jesus meant when he took children in his arms and as the second Gospel says, "laying his hands upon them," he talked to his disciples about the kingdom of God in terms of a child's spirit. The Gospel of Thomas is one of the "lost gospels" and of it we have left only a few pages. One of its sayings is a quotation from Jesus—"He that seeketh me shall find me in children from seven years old onwards, for there I am manifested." Well, there are some of us he laid his hands upon when we were about as young as that, and now as older years come on we bear witness to an abiding experience of divine companionship that holds life together, gives it resources of power, and makes sense of it.

> So was it when my life began;
> So is it now I am a man;
> So be it when I shall grow old.

Throughout this sermon I have not been quite sure whether I was talking more to the older people or to the young, but now at the close I know. I want a word especially with the young. Often when an older man talks to you, you think he does not know your problem, has forgotten what youth was like, or does not understand that youth today faces a situation far different from his long-past generation, and in this you doubtless are often justified. But now I am not talking about being young; I am talking about growing old. And you may not say that we do not know about that; *that* is something we do know about. And at New Year's time, when even you, amid all your youthful gaiety, must feel the passage of time, we are saying that as the years pass you are going to want the enduring experiences. For your happiness, then, if for no other reason, get them now. All these things we have spoken of, from the love of nature to the inward divine companionship, are easy to possess when one is young. Is it not as natural as breathing for children to know them all if they have half a chance? But when the years have passed and one is fifty years old, sixty years old, and all one's days have been expended on the transient and the merely

(*Continued on page 226*)

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal God, before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. With reverent awe we worship in the thought of Thy greatness. From our small preoccupations we come to the sanctuary to be reminded of great heights, vast horizons, and eternal vistas. Recover us from our triviality, we beseech Thee, that we may be lifted up by the vision of One above us, to whom we give our thought and reverence.

Comfort us in this way because the comfort we need is not so much the removal of our trouble as adequate strength to bear it. We seek wide horizons and deep meanings in life and ample reserves of spiritual power. Quicken and illumine our thought, we beseech Thee, that we, who are so strangely made that though we be weak in body and feeble in our very tenure of existence yet have eternity within our hearts, may recover our true selves in Thy presence and become souls again. Make us more than conquerors through him that loved us, and through our worship bring to us guidance, as though from some fresh altitude we looked upon our daily lives and saw the path where we should go.

We acknowledge our sins before Thee. We are guilty without excuse of intemperate and unkind speech and of unruly behavior. We are full of iniquity, and in evil committed and good neglected we wrong both ourselves, our fellows, and Thee. Yet often it is not sin but perplexity that ruins us. Life is too baffling for us. We are bewildered and undone by too many paths and have not wisdom to know which we ought to take. Lift us, we pray Thee, where, seeing over our bewilderment and around our troubles, we may find some wisdom from on high which will show us where we ought to go.

Great as Thou art, O God, be to us today more than greatness. Be near and close. O Thou Sun of righteousness, Who, though far away yet with Thy beams doth recreate the world and light our homes, be to us today both great and near. Eternal art Thou beyond our plummets' fathoming, beyond the soaring of our thought and our imaginations. Yet be to us also the Unseen Friend within, the Invisible Companion of our pilgrimage, that our hearts may be warmed and our minds quickened and our wills steadied in Thy spiritual fellowship.

As thus we pray for ourselves, let it be not for ourselves alone but for all our human fellows. For their sakes we would sanctify ourselves. Our hearts are touched by the turmoil and need of the world. Touch them more deeply. Our sympathies are stirred by the hurts of those hard bestead in the midst of difficult days. Deepen and widen our sympathy, we beseech Thee. Our indignation is aroused at the cruel and needless injustice of life. Arouse it to still a hotter flame, we beseech Thee, and may we make it effective with devoted and constructive work. May we think of our brothers, as we pray to Thee, because he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love Thee whom he hath not seen? Prepare us to be better soldiers of the common good in a day of social need, that peace and justice, righteousness and brotherhood may come, in the Spirit of the Christ. Amen.

As in a Mirror

By Caroline C. Foote

"Wad some power the giftie gie us to see oursels as others see us!"

(The Woman's Society of the Church reports through its International Relations Committee.)

This is the day when we look at ourselves as it were in a mirror, regarding each feature carefully and appraising the value of the whole in the light of the accomplishments of the year behind us. *This* year we hope that some "giftie" of clearer vision will show us of what importance we *might* be to the world.

Well, let us pull up the window shade, place ourselves in the most becoming light, and take a good look at our features, one by one, in our mirror.

Beginning at the top with our forehead—supposedly the seat of intellect—what has the studious group conducted by our International Committee been doing this winter?

This group has functioned much as in the past two years, with two successful study courses conducted by Miss Edith Osburn—six weeks in the fall considering "The Evolving Foreign Policy of the United States," and six weeks in the late winter discussing "Our National Policies Which Affect Our International Relations." The average attendance throughout the two courses was 69—a total of 828. Books from our International Book Shelf were used as side reading by 40 to 50 borrowers. The Bible Class and this Society jointly assumed the financial responsibility of these courses.

In addition to running these study courses the Woman's Society allotted a regular 15-minute period in their monthly program meetings to reports of the international situation around the world.

On the whole we are rather proud of the reflection of our smooth and thoughtful forehead in the mirror.

What did you say? Who spoke? I heard a voice! It seemed to come from behind our mirror! Can it be that this is a talking mirror? How uncomfortable! But listen to what it is saying—

"Proud, are you, that some women come once a week to listen to one of the best young speakers in the city? Complacent, are you, that 69 out of a church of 2600 are sufficiently interested in the Peace of the World to want to study the problem intelligently? Are they indeed an educational force when they leave this class and go home? Are they able to discuss the gold standard or tariffs convincingly and peacefully with their husbands? And what is your Committee doing about the other 1600 women in the church? Do you just trust that they are 'doing their bit' for Peace in other organizations outside the Church? Is it possible that only two women were sent by this Church to confer with great Peace leaders in Washington this year? How can you be complacent over what you call your 'smooth forehead in the mirror' when

you think of the mighty force the women of this church *could* exert if they were organized to follow their great preacher in establishing Justice and Peace on the earth?"

The voice ceases after this scorching comment. Well, that *was* rather a broadside from anything that looks as calm and peaceful as a mirror! We are a bit disconcerted by this criticism, but let us go back now to our inspection of our next feature—our eyes. These eyes looking deep for the spiritual source of all Peace, they must represent the Bible Class. What have they been seeing this winter at their Sunday morning sessions? For the month of February their attention was given to problems of international interest under the titles: "Cause and Cure of War," "What We Found in Japan," "Current Events in Church Life Around the World," "Turkey Today." They also shared the responsibility of the Discussion Groups with the Woman's Society, and there was a notable increase in their enthusiasm for Miss Osburn's presentation of her subjects.

We listen a bit nervously for the mirror's comment on this report. Here it comes!

"If this Bible Class finds peace for themselves, do they then go out to share it with the unpeaceful world? Do they work for peace as well as talk about it? Do they use these cherished hours as a retreat from the warring world, or do they thereby come to closer grips with the world's need? Do they study what is happening to their Christian religion the world around?"

The mirror's voice stops and leaves us wondering. We gaze a bit blankly in the glass at our next feature—the nose. Now the nose is always supposed to give character to the face, just as the Business and Professional Women do to our ensemble. So let us look at their winter's record.

They have been sponsoring a World Affairs group of about 50 members who meet at the Club's monthly dinners, and, under the leadership of Miss Elizabeth Young, discuss such questions as "The Italo-Ethiopian Conflict," "The Neutrality Policy of the United States," "The League of Nations," and "Franco-German Relations."

Members of this group presented a pantomime at one meeting when they represented different nations, appropriately costumed, and on their International Dinner Night they entertained 25 foreign student guests among the 212 present.

Does the mirror wish to make any comment on this feature? It does, as follows:

"These young women in business and professions probably have wider and more varied contacts than any other group of church women. Does your Committee suggest that this potential influence might be used for international understanding? Moreover, their grasp of economic problems gives them closer vision of the main causes of friction and war between nations. Could not a nucleus within their club form a Marathon group to make an intensive study of the economic causes of war?"

The mirror's voice stops long enough for us to arrange our hair and to notice how it softens and beautifies the other features. This feature is a kind of spreading halo encircling the face, and we take it to represent the Foreign Student Committee's outreaching contacts. This Committee has welcomed to the Church large groups of foreign students at teas and coffees, functions and fes-

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The First Dinner for Riverside Church Women

Assembly Hall—October 19, 1936—6.30 O'Clock

MURIEL LESTER OF OLD BOW, LONDON, WILL BE THE SPEAKER

By Margaret T. Applegarth

Undoubtedly the moment has come in our church life when it is time for the women of the Church and congregation to become more conscious of one another; and so, for all the women members—irrespective of their connection or lack of connection with any particular women's organization—a Women's Dinner is being planned for Monday, October nineteenth, at half past six, in the Assembly Hall.

Even the mere coming together of such a cross-section of our membership would justify this event, but to further the actual value of it we have been fortunate to secure as guest speaker one of the world's arresting and notable Christians: Muriel Lester, of Old Bow, London, England.

Young, vivacious, saintly—this unusual woman comes to us from a life of singular beauty and forcefulness, a life with a touch of glamour in the telling but of startling and realistic grit in the day-by-day living of it. Because you will enjoy her more if some of her background is painted for you, this short summary gives a partial picture: you can read between the lines what vigor and vitality keeps such a frail person forever plunged in the thick of good works, for Miss Lester has been to the most unlovely section of London what Jane Addams has been to the most unlovely part of Chicago.

There should be mention, first of all, of her voluntary poverty, since it is a footnote to all her character. Daughter of a well-to-do shipbuilder who made his money in Old Bow, she declined the annuity he left to her and began limiting herself even before she was twenty years old to an expenditure of seven dollars a month in addition to the simplest food, with lodging in a cell six by nine which is supplied to each of the ten workers in Kingsley Hall (given by her father in 1914 in memory of her brother). The new trust deed, turning over her annuity to be administered for the poor of Bow, was the first of its kind in English history and caused considerable legal consternation: "Whereas the annuitant is of opinion that she has no right to accept this income where her neighbors lack necessities, holding that God's law of providing bountifully for all is more wise, sane and decent than the law of the land which secures to a few people more than they need while the many have to endure less than they need" was the strange wording of the new deed.

Kingsley Hall does not receive any benefit from this annuity which the poor of Bow themselves expend for those of their neighbors they consider most in need. To operate the settlement Miss Lester raises an annual sum from friends; and because of her remarkable venture into personal poverty the news-

papers have a constant interest in her, and such notables as John Galsworthy and Charlie Chaplin have been proud to help. It takes immense skill to dress on five shillings a week, with two shillings over for spending money; and yet this is done gladly by her group.

Indeed that one word, "gladly," is almost the motif of her days. (When she was invited to speak at the October meeting, her cable was a delightfully crisp, single word: "Gladly!") Far from being an ascetic, she lives life gloriously, radiantly, abundantly—the merriest of companions, a keen lover of nature. A masseuse said to her once: "The trouble with you, Miss, is that you enjoy everything too much!"

But as she herself has said: "We are really the only lucky people. The depression doesn't make very much difference to us. Then that horrible feeling of guilt that seizes one, when a beggar or a cold, hungry or ill-looking person passes is not quite so agonizing, strangely enough, if one is living near them. Then there is the satisfaction of discovering that one can get along without many things that used to seem necessary. That, of course, means freedom, release from the narrowness of convention. Perhaps the jolliest thing of all is the heightened pleasure one finds in things that used to be taken for granted, the quickening of one's perceptions, the access of appreciation in country air, trees, flowers, holidays."

She is a happy combination of Mary and Martha, of the mystic and the minister, of the dreamer and the doer. Gay in the midst of her problems, her buoyant hopefulness seems to be contagious, and wherever she goes she remakes souls.

In Bow she has created peacemakers. She is a delightful speaker and preacher, but she lets no one in her Sunday evening audience at Kingsley Hall either sing a hymn or repeat scripture which their hearts cannot fully endorse. She carries with her a copy of Albrecht Dürer's engraving of the hands of a saint clasped in prayer, and when she herself prays her face glows so that those nearby are apt to say: "Now the transfiguration is easier to understand." During the war the Lord's Prayer was repeated only by those who had brought themselves to practice forgiveness and reconciliation. And this at a time when the air raids had bombed a nearby school, killing twenty-three children, and Kingsley Hall had been bombed by a Zeppelin: "But we refused to pronounce a moratorium on the Sermon on the Mount for the duration of the war!"

Such a spirit has remade her neighbors in Bow. They believe in her. They follow her example with complete approval. No man can become *their* enemy, either, just because he happens to have been born on the other side of a river or a sea or a boundary line, or because his government has issued an ultimatum to the English government. So we find that the mothers of Bow formed a "living newspaper" and marched to the House of Commons holding up placards protesting against the German blockade which was starving German children—although ecclesiastical dignitaries and prominent editors were refusing aid; but her women, knowing the taste of hunger, were warmed to action.

This instantaneous and active helpfulness sends her over the world at times, as this past year when a burning desire for "peace on earth" has taken her to many lands and even led her to reveal to the Japanese what havoc their illegal sale of opium is working in

(*Continued on page 226*)

Open Windows

By Caroline M. Platt

Who has not seen an undreamed-of landscape through a shuttered window suddenly flung wide?

In the art class last winter at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Miss Mabel Harrison Duncan opened windows for many of us so that we could see with a keener appreciation some of the beauty bequeathed to us through the centuries.

By means of lectures, slides, and original examples in the galleries she traced the slow development of Christian art from the Byzantine through the Gothic period.

The Christian story was told in richness of color and design, in mosaics and icons as well as sculpture, tapestry, and stained glass. Those old masters made their saints and prophets glow in the purples, reds, and blues of exquisite colored glass. Or they made long, flat mosaic figures stand out against their background of gold, thickly encrusting every inch of wall and ceiling with gorgeous decorations. The domes and arches of this early architecture reflected the influences of the Near East.

From this purely decorative treatment of religious themes the growing realism of the succeeding period was visible in its art. In architecture man's spiritual aspiration was expressed in pinnacled churches.

A similar transition took place in painting. Because of his need of sympathy and consolation, the Queen Mother and the child seated stiffly upon her knee became the human mother and child against the background of familiar streets and hills. The figure of Christ

Courtesy of the *Metropolitan Museum of Art*

VIRGIN AND CHILD
(Wood, painted)
French, School of Auvergne—Second Half of XII Century

Courtesy of the *Metropolitan Museum of Art*

VIRGIN AND CHILD
(Wood, painted and gilded)
French, Late XIII Century

merely extending a hand of blessing to the worshipper became the Christ of pity, love, and suffering. Because religion played a large part in daily life, a greater realism and animation was expressed in sculpture as well as in painting.

If it be true that religion and art would cease to exist but for women, the members of our art class are functioning in their peculiar sphere in providing an opportunity to increase the stimulation to be gained in looking through these windows into a world rich with beauty and culture.

The Museum has established this course through the good office of Miss Duncan for its members who are affiliated with Riverside Church, but it is open also to members of the Woman's Society and the Women's Bible Class upon the payment of a very small fee imposed by the Museum. Miss Duncan will give another course at the Metropolitan Museum on October 21st, November 18th, January 20th, February 17th, March 17th, and April 21st, at eleven o'clock on "The Historic Development of Art in China." Special studies and travel in the East qualify Miss Duncan to make this a most interesting experience for us.

Because we know that we shall derive even greater value and pleasure from this course if we share this privilege with our friends, we are extending this invitation to you.

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Alliance of Church With Medicine Seen in War Against Disease

Action of Federal Council of Churches Indicates Growing Interest of Clergy in Relationship of Religion to Health

DOCTORS in the near future will have a new ally in their war against disease—the churches and the clergy.

The recent action of the Federal Council of Churches is indicative of the growing concern of religious leaders with problems relating to health. The Executive Committee recommended the appointment of a special committee on religion and health to keep continually in touch with the many experiments that are going on in religious circles in connection with the relation of religion to bodily and mental health; to develop standards by which to evaluate the various experiments in this field; and to use the material thus gathered for educational purposes in helping to bring about more effective coöperation between ministers and physicians.

Clergymen obviously cannot assume the regular practice of psychiatry, but a growing literature emphasizes the necessity of being able to recognize some of the more common ailments and of being qualified to give assistance when needed.

John Rathbone Oliver, the distinguished author of *Pastor Psychiatry and Mental Health*, points out that "the physician cannot readily seek out his patients—they must come to him; whereas the true pastor or social worker is able to do much in the way of prevention. This very fact makes a knowledge of mental illness a proper part of his equipment. Some of a pastor's most important work is done in personal conferences in his study."

Canon Lindsay Dewar and Cyril E. Hudson fearlessly advocate a careful and scientific study of the problems of the soul. In their *Manual of Pastoral Psychology* they express the hope that "before another generation is past every town of considerable size in this country may have at least one expert medical psychotherapist, and one expert priest capable of handling cases of moral and spiritual disease, the number of which is far greater than those with no experience in these matters would suppose."

Lord Dawson of Penn, one of England's greatest contemporary physicians, has long since recognized the invaluable aid the pastor can render the physician in curing the mental and physical ills of society. He has expressed the opinion that in both functional and organic diseases there are reactions of mind and temperament, and "we have to study not only the material disease but the complete fabric or make-up of this or that personal illness." Psychical and physical healing, he concludes, should not be divorced from each other but should be complementary and coördinated.

Dr. John G. Mackenzie, in his *Souls in the Making*, observes that the visit of a sympathetic pastor who can tap his people's faith will never be resented but

welcomed in the sick room by the well-informed medical practitioner. Religion and science seem destined to coöperate, in an ever increasing degree, to enable our people to achieve a unified and well-integrated personality that is so essential to successful living.

Dr. Henry C. Link, author of the currently popular *Return to Religion*, tells us that, if we want to be healthy, wealthy and wise, we should go to church.

As director of the Psychological Service Center in New York City, he supervised a psychological study of 10,000 unemployed men and women. He found that the individuals who believed in religion or attended a church had significantly better personalities than those who did not.

A famed European psychologist, Carl Gustav Jung, has treated people from every nation during the past thirty years. The larger number were Protestants, a smaller number Jews, and not more than five or six were believing Catholics.

"Among all my patients in the second half of life," he said, "there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life."

Every one of them fell ill because he had discarded religion. None of them were really healed who did not regain his religious outlook.

Dr. Jung's patients were educated persons. A considerable number came to see him, not because they were suffering from a neurosis but because they could find no meaning in life.

"Some of them perhaps thought that I knew a magic formula," he stated, "but I was soon forced to tell them that I, too, had no answer to give."

There is a definite relation between religion and health. With the rapid decline of religious life in the twentieth century, the neuroses have grown noticeably more frequent. Thousands of our people are suffering from unresolved conflicts, nervous breakdowns, intense shyness, inhibitions or repressions of various kinds. They are handicapped by feelings of insecurity, inadequacy or inferiority. Unless these maladjustments or pathological disturbances are properly treated, the inevitable result will be mental and physical shipwreck.

A secret pride, a rejection of the laws of life are at the bottom of much unhappiness and failure. People grasp at science because they want to cast off their allegiance to God. They will reject the Gospels, as the Archbishop of Brisbane has pointed out, without ever having examined their authenticity, and frown on religion without ever reflecting that on the foundations of faith in God rests the civilization and security which they enjoy.

Modern man is crying aloud his hunger and thirst for peace of mind, for happiness, for a plan of life that will meet the acid test of daily living in this topsy-turvy world. Religion offers such a plan.

Religion is not, as the scoffer would express it, "a bunch of impractical and antiquated theology." It is not mere superstition or mummery. It is not the last refuge of people who are afraid to think or do not know how to think.

On the contrary, religion is the key to successful living. It offers mankind a plan of life that will stand up under the stress and strain that our complex modern civilization imposes upon all of us. The simplification of our problems depends, in large measure, upon the acceptance of the truth that life on this earth is a testing and a preparation for heaven.

Righteous living, of course, is not easy. Resistance to sin nearly always involves some degree of suffering. The trials and tribulations of life, however, are a means to an end. We may dominate them or be dominated by them. We may accept them with the knowledge that they are part of the test that every man must go through, or we may permit them to poison and warp our lives.

A distinguished British psychiatrist, whose entire life had been concerned with the suffering of the human mind, once stated that "of all the hygienic measures to counteract depression of spirits, and all the miserable results of a distracted mind, I would undoubtedly give first place to the simple habit of prayer."

Two thousand years ago, Christ instructed us to pray constantly. Modern psychologists are discovering that prayer is the greatest tonic for the mind, the greatest antidote against neurasthenia and nervous breakdown.

The therapeutic value of confession is now generally recognized as an essential requirement for mental health. The Protestant is grateful for the privilege of talking freely to a sympathetic pastor. "Probably some of us," writes Muriel Harris, "know in our own experience the relief of having our sins dealt with plainly, as sins, by someone who understands and is not shocked. We hate impertinent questions, but, on the other hand, we are likely to lose any respect we have for a friend if he is afraid, when the supreme moment comes, to deal honestly with us. If, like Christ, he is a true friend, then his touch will bring healing and not harm."

—JOHN J. O'CONNOR,
N.C.J.C. NEWS SERVICE

THINGS THAT NEVER WEAR OUT

(Continued from page 216)

seasonal in human life, then it is not easy. Then one wakes up to discover that somewhere along the road one has missed the real treasures that moth and rust cannot corrupt nor thieves break through and steal.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon December 29, 1935.

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THE FIRST DINNER FOR RIVERSIDE CHURCH WOMEN

(Continued from page 221)

China. Certain of the Japanese government officials may have found themselves surprised into asking her to investigate even more fully, which she did —gladly.

It was with her that Mahatma Gandhi stayed when he came to London for the Round Table Conference; a cell on the roof of Kingsley Hall was given to him, where he could have sun and air and silence; but the simple cot had to be borrowed . . . so narrowly are the wants of the workers met. But the very youngest children on the nearby streets know who is their best friend, and Miss Lester finds in such love an abundance more precious than furniture.

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(*Continued from page 219*)

tivities, picnics and veladas. The mirror's only comment to this is—"How many of your 2600 church members have never had a foreigner cross the threshold? Cannot your International Relations Committee help to unlatch these doors another year?"

Be still now, voice of the mirror! Give us just one more chance to inspect our last feature—the mouth. We want to see how this most articulate feature voices the feelings of the Guild with regard to peace. The Guild's program has been unusually full of an interest in International Affairs this year. One of their dramatic performances was "Peace on Earth"; three worship services were dedicated to peace; they sold peace bonds; they voted for peace-minded political candidates; they discussed peace throughout the entire year. They plan for a Youths' Peace Conference next fall. What have you to say of this feature, voice of the mirror?

"This is your most mobile, most virile feature. Take care that you sympathize both with its enthusiasms *and* its disappointments. The mouth does a lot of smiling, but also from it come the bitterest words of young cynics fed up on sentimentalism. Do not look for words of Peace from this source unless you work with them to overcome the injustices which they know are the causes of war.

"Now you spoke of your mouth as the *last* feature. You are as oblivious as a small boy washing his face and entirely forgetting his ears! You have given no attention to *your* ears! There they are, most important features, to right and to left of you. The children on one side, the men on the other. What can you women hope to accomplish for peace unless you educate the children and cooperate with the men? Why wait for war to commandeer 'men, women and children'? Do it yourselves first. You forget even to mention that the whole Church School program is definitely built on 'an international and interracial' basis; and that at least *one* group, including men, spent four Sunday mornings conferring on 'War and Peace.' "

Enough, oh voice of the mirror! We see by the strong light of truth what we have lacked and what we might do for this Great Cause of Peace and Justice, in this Strong Church, in this Biggest City in the World. We see the part we women might play in unifying and enthusing our whole church. We see the part our Church might play as leader and organizer of other churches all over the land. We even see the part our country might play in recreating a wiser, fairer, stronger League of Nations.

But how can we weld together a great and varied company of people in one such noble endeavor? How can we women grapple with the tangled international problems of today which baffle and crush great statesmen? In the face of such a troubled world what can our little committee of twenty women do even though supported by the confidence and affection of every member of our Woman's Society? Give us some constructive suggestion, Voice of the Mirror!

Listen! The mirror's voice speaks very gently now—or is it another's voice?—saying "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Shall we lay down our mirror now and take up our task again?

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DATES

September 18-20

The Church School Staff will hold its regular fall week-end conference at Bear Mountain.

September 27

Dr. Fosdick will preach.

The Church School will resume its regular program.

The Men's Class and the Women's Bible Class likewise will re-open their sessions for the year.

Annual Memorial Service, Police Square Club, at four o'clock. Dr. Fosdick will conduct the service and make the address. Commissioner Valentine and Mayor La Guardia will participate. The public is invited.

September 30

Church Night. Address by Dr. Fosdick and reception of members.

October 4

Communion at four-thirty o'clock.

October 5

The Church Staff will be out of town for their annual Fall Conference.

October 19

Dinner for women of Riverside Church (see special article in this issue).

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"Living Stone," written by Miss Alma N. Schilling and A. J. William Myers, is now on sale at the Church Literature Counter. This book is the factual record of a typical educational enterprise with the boys and girls of Riverside Church. Miss Schilling, before her death, was Supervisor of the Junior Department of the Church School.

"The church is not wood and stone and steel, but boys and girls, men and women, who live in the spirit of God. They are the Living Stone of the Living Church."

FIVE SERMONS

by

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

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"The Church Must Go Beyond Modernism"

"On Being a Realistic Pacifist"

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